

The MAID of the FOREST

By RANDALL PARRISH
ILLUSTRATED BY D. J. LAVIN

CHAPTER XVIII—Continued.

"A soldier of England, an aide to Hamilton! You lie. When Hamilton knows what I know he will let you limp from limb. You come here to frighten us with your threats—you! I spit upon you! Sie-te-wah, warriors, fear me; you know who I am; I travel with you on the war-trail; I go with you into battle. Now I speak with the straight tongue. You do not know this man, but I do. See; he dare not face me; watch him shrink back afraid. Well! there is reason."

"I fear you, Jules Lappin?"

"Ay! and with cause. Knew you ever the time I failed to pay my debts? Or wreck my vengeance? I have you now, and will crush the white-livered heart out of you with these hands. Listen, Shawnees, Miamis, Ojibwas, while I tell you this fellow is. Then give me to me—I ask no more."

He stopped, bent forward, his fingers clinched. The ring of Indians pressed closer, but the old chief waved them back, standing motionless.

"Speak, Englishman," he said with dignity, "and with cause. Knew you ever the time I failed to pay my debts? Or wreck my vengeance? I have you now, and will crush the white-livered heart out of you with these hands. Listen, Shawnees, Miamis, Ojibwas, while I tell you this fellow is. Then give me to me—I ask no more."

"He is a renegade, a traitor," and Lappin's hand pointed at the man he accused, "the uniform he wears a lie. How do I know? Because he fought me yonder in the woods on the island, because he was in the cabin with the others. This is the man who was left for dead, who escaped. Do you recognize him now?"

I saw three faces, and heard the scream of voices.

"Ay! you do; and the woman, the Wyandot squaw, helped him. I said so before; low we have the proof. You drove her out, afraid to treat her as an enemy, and she goes to him, thinking his uniform will frighten you into sparing the hunter from torture. She brings him here to threaten you with what England will do. What say you, Shawnees, to the dog?"

The voice burst into a wild yell that seemed to split the night, but the fur trader flung up his hand.

"Back all of ye!" he roared savagely. "I claim this man as mine! Who has better right? I'll throttle the life out of him with my bare hands before ye all. Have your warriors give us space, Sie-te-wah."

The chief of the Shawnees, his eyes blazing, under tangled hair, uplifted his arm.

"This white man's right," he ordered gruffly. "I have spoken."

I drew my breath deeply, yet what could I do? The rifle trembled in my grasp, but dare not use it. The unfortunate Englishman stood in my place, was mistaken for me, but if I revealed myself it could serve no end—would only leave me helpless to aid the girl. I could not think of him at that moment, but only of her.

It was at the work of an instant. Lappin whirled on his victim, flinging his gun to be ground.

"Face me, you cur, you spy!" he shouted. "Come out from behind that squaw. You got me once when my foot slipped. Let's see what you can do now. What! you won't? Well, you will!"

He thrust Rene back, hurling her with one sweep of his arm into the crowd of warriors, one of whom clutched her as she fell. Then he struck her shrieking, startled Englishman vicious blow in the face.

CHAPTER XIX.

In the hands of Savages.

I saw her red web on the white cheek led by the fur trader's rough hand, his arms flung up, a sudden passing anger darkening his eyes. This was more than flesh and blood could stand, and not retaliate. Wild rage swamped the place of courage; his lips parted like a cornered wolf; he had forgotten all but hate. It was not a man, but a maddened animal who crouched for a spring.

"Fight!" I will! Yes, to the death!" I snapped out hotly. "But you lie then you say I fought you before; then you say I was in the cabin—ye lie, you dog of a white savage—ou lie!"

"Messieurs, it is a mistake," I caught the girl's protesting voice in the hush. "It was not—"

"A lie!" Lappin broke in crazed with rage. "What am I—blind? I saw you bound, with my own eyes. Let the squaw up. Oh! you will; the have it now!"

They set like two enraged bucks in the rest, clutched at each other in blind deadly battle. They were big men evenly matched, fired with hatred. Never did I witness such fighting as mad barbarism, the ferocity which stopped at nothing.

The soldier I knew was unarmed, but a knife gleamed at Lappin's belt. Either he forgot it, or in his rage did not use the steel. Oh! how they fought like two cats, snarling and snapping, throttling each other, occasionally snarling breaking free to send a felled fist crashing into an exposed head. Once the soldier went down, Lappin kicked him, and he was gripped himself and flung backward. But they were up together, bleeding both, panting for breath, both lips ripped off their bodies, rising fiercely, as they rushed at each other once more.

Merciful Mother! What a sight that was! A soldier, and border-bred, hid my face in my arms—and yet I looked and saw. The very ferocity of it was a fascinating horror—the black, black night boys, around, the forests shuddered in; the howling dogs snarled at their heels; the red glare of brand that ring of yelling savages, being back and forth to give the combatants room. Rene had dis-

appeared—forced back into the half covered man, as the savages surged forward, of Brady I caught no glimpse. That was no scene to ever forget, to blot out with passing years. The wild savagery of it burned in on the brain; those dark faces, with wild eyes and dangling hair; the waving arms, and leaping bodies, the gleam of weapons tossed aloft, the jungle and din of excited voices in jargon of unknown tongues. How the red flames danced over them all, now in shadow, now in glare of light, making them appear fiend incarnate. I saw the soldier's hat falling in the midst, huge men in death grapple, fighting as tigers fight—resourceless, merciless; tearing each other's flesh, battering each other's faces, gripping, clutching, straining in effort at mastery. Again and again they crunched into the crowd, reeling from blows, or hurled back by sheer strength of muscle; they sobbed forth curses, staggering with weakness. I saw Lappin drive his head into his opponent's stomach as though it were a battering-ram; I saw the soldier's teeth into the fur-trader's hand, as if he were a mad dog. 'Twas then the



The Very Ferocity of It Was a Fascinating Horror.

brute reached down and fumbled for his knife—found it, and with one hoarse cry of triumph, sent the bright blade home. Twice he struck, and they went staggering down together, locked in each other's arms, the soldier dead ere he struck the ground.

It was bodiam then followed by a breathless hush as Sie-te-wah pressed forward with uplifted arms. Two warriors lifted Lappin to his feet, and as his gripping hand plucked out the knife from the wound, I saw the gush of blood crimsoning the dead man's side. An instant the victor stood glaring down, reeling in weakness, upheld by others. Then he laughed, waving the dripping blade.

"Ah! good!" he cried. "There is one more recruit for hell. Bring me the girl here. The time she had her lesson also."

They brought her forward, a red brave grasping either arm. I caught sight of her face, white, drawn, but not with fear, and sighted my rifle across the log at the white ruffian's breast. With clinched lips I lay, finger to trigger. Yet I waited—thank God, I waited. I know not what restrained me, only it was no fear of consequences to myself. It must have been the expression of the woman's uplifted face, the quick glance she cast about, as though, in silent warning to me. I took it as a signal, a message of restraint. The fur trader, burly and brutal, still panting for breath, yet able to stand alone now, and conscious of his victory, thrust his reeking knife back into his belt with a coarse laugh.

"How do you like that, you Wyandot squaw?" he asked, leaning down into her face.

"When you have these men release my arms I will answer you," she returned quietly.

"Oh, you will, hey! You'll be glad enough to talk before I am through. Let go of her there—yes; that's what I mean. Now look here—there lies your English officer. He's paid the price of being a fool. Look at him; are you ready to speak now?"

"He was nothing to me," she said slowly, "nothing. But he fought a man's fight, and was killed by cowardly treachery."

"Constant coughing," continues the doctor, "is precisely like scratching a wound on the outside of the body. So long as it is done the wound will not heal. Let a person, when tempted to cough, draw a long breath and hold it until it warms and soothes every air cell, and some benefit will soon be received from this process. The nitrogen which is thus refined acts as a anodyne to the mucous membrane, allaying the desire to cough and giving the throat and lungs a chance to heal. At the same time, a suitable medicine will aid Nature in her effort to recuperate."—Family Doctor.

His Status.

"There goes a man who makes it a point to treat all women like."

"The brutal! Who is he?"

"You see, he could hardly treat them when they're well. He's a doctor."

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"What! You squaw, you dare—"

"Of course I dare. Do you suppose I fear you, Jules Lappin, or your gang of outlaws? He voice scornful. "Why, I challenge you to lay hand on me. You know who I am; you have eaten in the topee of my father. I know who you are, and I despise you. You call me a Wyandot squaw; threaten what you will do; point me to this dead man whom you have murdered. Why? To frighten me—me? Very well, I'll answer you. I am a Wyandot; I am Running Water; but in my veins flows also the best blood of France. Mine is not a race of cowards and murderers, thieves and traders; my ancestors were soldiers and men. And you think I am afraid of you—you cur of the woods; afraid of you? Touch me, Jules Lappin, if you dare; I challenge you. Come, I wait for you to lay hand on me."

He stared at her sullenly, angry enough, yet with the bullying look gone from his mottled face. Something about the girl's sharp words, her cool defiance—had left him uncertain.

"More than that, Jules Lappin," she went on passionately, "you are going to pay for all this," and she pointed down at the dead body, "pay for it, do you understand? That man was what he claimed to be—an aide to Hamilton. England pays her debts, Monsieur Lappin. Ay, and so do the Wyandots; have you forgotten that so soon? Have you forgotten what befell the Frenchman, Philippe Bridau? Have you blood from memory already the fate of Michael Corcoran? Nay, you do! The village when the chiefs of the Wyandots dealt out justice to these renegades. Answer me!"

The cool boldness of her words stunned the fellow. I could see him glance about into the dark woods, and then at the faces of the savages pressing about them. Few among them understood what was said, and their gestures, the fierce expression of their eyes, gave the renegade courage. He had already gone too far for retreat; his only chance now was to proceed—to browbeat this girl, frighten her, and trust to the wilderness for a hiding place.

"Stand aside, all of ye; get back and give us room, ye red scum!" he roared, his rage increasing as he gave it vent in words. "Well, I've heard ye talk, all of it, ye breed, an' that's what I care for your threats," and he snapped his fingers in her face. As she stood silent, motionless, looking straight at him with scorn unutterable in her eyes, the brute clinched his red fist, stepping forward as if he would strike.

"Curse ye! I'm a mind to let ye have some of the same medicine I gave him. You'll laugh at Jules Lappin, will ye? Ah, ho! but I know a better way than that to make ye cry. By all the gods, we'll roast that Yankee friend of yours to a turn, and ye'll stand by and watch. That'll fetch the two of ye to yer senses. Here Shawnees, two of ye come here. Pick up this cur, and throw it out of the way, over there in the edge of the wood. We'll want this place presently. Sie-te-wah!"

"The chief is here," with dignity.

"Twas your vote that the hunter die by torture?"

"It was so spoken."

"Then he shall—to spite this squaw of a Wyandot, if for no better reason. Bid your warriors take the dog up."

For the moment, in the confusion, the noise and rushing back and forth of figures dimly seen in the red light, I lost sense of what was being done. There was a babel of yells, a wild mingling of half-naked forms dancing about through the shadows. Those whose identity I could comprehend had been swallowed up by the rush of bodies. Occasionally Lappin's voice sounded above the din, as he cursed out some order. Then, forth from the surging, excited mass of savages, two braves came directly toward where I lay concealed, staggering under the weight of Hayward's dead body. I drew back my rifle, sinking lower behind the rotten log. The weight of the dead man caused them to shuffle forward, grunting to each other, glad enough to be rid of the burden. In the first dark shadow they let go, flinging him down against the very log behind which I lay, holding my breath in fear.

Even as I gazed with eyes of horror, my mind a chaos, every nerve throbbing in physical pain, there came to me the one hope, the one chance for me to meet alone the situation.

CHAPTER XX.

The Ghost of the Lieutenant.

With eyes on those figures flitting out the fire, their discordant yelling deadening all other sound, their whole attention centered now on savage vengeance, crept over the log, and crouched low beside the motionless body. Ugh! but I dreaded to touch it, to feel the awfulness of clammy flesh. As the upturned face, with staring dead eyes, revealed indistinctly by the red glimmer, met my gaze, it was like

looking into my own. For an instant it seemed as if I stared down at myself, bent above my own insensate body. A shudder ran through me, my hands shaking as with palsy. Yet I rallied, crushing back the benumbing horror of that vision, as the hateful voice of Lappin rose above the din.

Recklessly I stripped the red jacket from the body, ripped in the struggle with Lappin, and showing clearly the rent made by the knife, and crawled back over the log, to put it on. Beyond my cover, not a dozen feet away, was a shallow ravine, and the light streaming through tree branches, fell upon a clay bank, gleaming a yellowish white. I reached it on hands and knees, streaking my face with moist clay, until it must have been ghastly, and plastering even more on my hair in horrible representation of the scalped victim.

Still unsatisfied, yet knowing of nothing I could add, and warned by the shouts that I must act without delay, I stole forward to the edge of the wood, pausing there a moment to muster my courage, and take one last glance at the scene revealed by the firelight. All the center of the opening seemed alive with Indians crowding forward about the prisoner, who stood bound to a stump, facing me. Other savages were running swiftly back and forth bearing armful of dried wood, which were cast down at Brady's feet, the mass already rising above his knees. Excitement was evidenced in shouts and wild cries, in frenzied leaping, dancing, and mad gesticulation. The Shawnee chief stood silent, with folded arms, but burning eyes, while Lappin grasped mademoiselle's shoulder, holding her to place in the front rank of those red demons, his voice shouting forth orders, or taunting the motionless hunter, who made no reply. Rene was upon her knees, her face hidden, but I could see the white gleam of the crucifix as she held it forth in the glow of light. Brady's face was not toward me, nor revealed clearly by the fire, yet he held his head erect, his eyes roving over the devilish faces. The wounded jaw was bound about with a strip of bloody rag. Without speaking, it yet seemed to me he mocked them. Once he twisted in his bonds, and gazed at her as if he would utter some word, but changed his mind, and, for the first time, a look of pain swept into his face. Lappin saw the effort, called out some foul insult, and a war cry sprang forward, striking the defenseless man across the lips, and driving his head back against the stump.

The vicious act drove me mad, and I stepped forth into the open, flinging my gun down in the underbrush. No eye in all that swam was turned my way. In silence I moved forward until I was within a few yards of the struggling mass. Then I stopped, full in the red glare of fire, my arms uplifted, and gave utterance to a deep, sepulchral groan. God alone knows how awful was the apparition. To them, in startled horror, I was the dead man, standing there with ghastly face, and arms outstretched, my appearance rendered more terrible by the fitful gleam of fire, revealing features and form, slowing on torn red jacket, and head slashed by scalping knife, behind me the night and the black woods. No doubt it was a slight to bring fear to any heart, but to those murderers, their minds poisoned by superstition, it brought panic—a terror too terrible to resist. They knew me in the instant; I was the spirit of the dead; I had come back for vengeance; with clammy hands I was clutching them; with sightless eyes I was seeking them out. There was one yell, breathing forth the terror of their souls; I saw eyes, wild with horror, staring at me. I saw men run and fall, scramble to their feet, and run again; I saw leaping bodies fight like fiends in an effort to get free. Sie-te-wah, struck by the rush, shrieked like a woman, stared toward me from where he lay on the ground, found his feet and ran. I caught glimpse of Rene's face uplifted, the cross still before her eyes; of Lappin, hurled over by the rush, trampled into the earth by flying feet, finally regain his knees, his face white as death, as he heaved back toward me with protruding eyes.

Again I groaned, the unearthly sound rising even above the din, seemingly echoed by the great forest and flung back to earth again by the black curtain overhead. Ay! it was an eerie sound! It even made my own flesh creep. Crazy by the terror of it, panic-stricken by the fears of others, the fur trader leaped to his feet, flung forward his rifle and fired. The ball sang past my ear, and I walked straight toward him, my ghastly face exposed to the fire, my hands reaching out in blind clutching. With one yell, piercing, the yelp of a frightened wolf, he turned and dashed for the woods, starting back over his shoulders, even as he crashed headlong into the underbrush. For fear they might pause when once under cover—the first spasm of terror gone—I ran forward to the forest edge, giving utterance to another groan to spur them on. But this was not needed—terror, awe, terror had struck into their very souls.

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INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

City E. O. BELL, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

LESSON FOR JULY 26

THE POUNDS AND THE TALENTS.

LESSON TEXT—Luke 19:11-27. Cf. Matt. 25:14-30.

GOLDEN TEXT—"Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter into the joy of thy lord." Matt. 25:21 R. V.

We are told plainly why Jesus spoke the first parable (v. 11). We must beware of confusing these two parables though they are one in their essential teachings.

The parable of the pounds was uttered before the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem while that of the talents was spoken subsequently. This association does not mean identity for each has a separate lesson. Both have to do with an absent lord whose return was imminent. The Jews looked for a temporal visible Kingdom and many were associating the earthly life of our Lord with that expected manifestation. Hence this parable as recorded by Luke.

Issue Is Fidelity.

I. "Occupy Till I Come," vv. 11-14. Both of these parables have to do with the return of an absent lord who will then establish his kingdom. In view of this return and consummation, his servants are to give their undivided attention to their immediate responsibilities. They are to trade, to do business with that that has been entrusted to them. They are to actively discharge their duty. Ere the visible kingdom is established, Jesus told these Jews, there must be a period of preparation. Jesus, himself, is the "noblemen" whose ascension into heaven where he is to receive a kingdom fulfills the "departure into a far country." He will return to set up that kingdom, Acts 1:9-11, with "all authority," Matt. 28:18 R. V., Eph. 1:22; 1 Pet. 3:22. He may return at any time. In neither parable is there a full description of the kingdom as it is to be established, for both have to do with the servants. The issue is that of fidelity in each case.

The "citizens" (v. 14) include his proper subjects the Jews, John 1:11; Acts 4:27-28, and in this connection we recall their cry, "Away with him, crucify!" Luke 23:8; John 8:15. These "citizens" also include all of his professed followers but not necessarily regenerated men, Matt. 7:22-23. The king gives to each servant (v. 13) a pound (about \$18.00). His deposit is equal in each case. In the parable of the talents there is a difference in the amounts bestowed. This last emphasizes the fact that each is to be held responsible according to the measure of his own personal ability. Putting these two together we see that all the servants of the king are responsible for the one pound which is a symbol of the common faith of the kingdom power. At the same time the servant is also responsible for that common power according to the measure in which it is entrusted to him, in which he is able to deal with it. The small amount of one pound indicates our responsibility for the smallest gifts.

Parable of Pounds.

II. "When He Was Returned," vv. 15-30. The parable of the pounds was spoken to those who thought he must at once establish his kingdom of God. That of the talents was given in answer to the disciples' inquiry as to when certain things which he had foretold would take place. Upon his return all these servants will be summoned before him, Matt. 25:18, Rom. 14:10-12, 1 Cor. 5:10. As Jesus stood there, he, likewise of that as of all other ages, saw ahead of him Jerusalem with its scourging, suffering and death. He also saw beyond that his resurrection and departure to receive a kingdom (v. 12), a period therefore in this world during which his servants shall be responsible for the care of his interests, a time during which they shall occupy, do business with what he has entrusted them of the kingdom authority and power. All of this will culminate in his return when he will deal with those to whom this responsibility has been given, and then establish finally his kingdom. In the parable Jesus deals with each servant separately, and emphasizes the fact of stewardship. The pound belonged to the king. For his faithfulness the first servant received v. 17, (a) the king's commendation and (b) authority over ten cities. Later, (v. 24) he also received another pound. The second did not give quite so good a report, and his reward lacked the approbation of the king, though he is placed over "five cities." His reward was in proportion to his faithfulness.

The third report was bad. It reveals neglect, laziness, and a wrong conception regarding the king. He sought to excuse his sloth by blaming another. The excuses of the sinner always condemn himself, not God, and augment the sinner's guilt. The "wicked servant" lost what he would not use. If we will not use we must lose. Doubtless this servant considered himself unfortunate, though he was judged "out of his own mouth." Reverting again to those citizens who hated him and would not have the king to "reign over them," Jesus closes his parable (v. 27) by a most terrible indictment. God bears long with his enemies and is kind but he will not bear forever. II Thess. 1:7-9.

All of our present activities are within the period during which the Lord is absent. We wait his coming. This fact alone is an indication of our responsibility. He must reign—absent or present, willingly, lovingly or even unwillingly by force "till he hath put all enemies under his feet," 1 Cor. 15:24-28. Then shall be established an undisputed, eternal and visible kingdom.

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MANUEL NEAR A DIVORCE?

City E. O. BELL, Director of Evening Department, The Moody Bible Institute, Chicago.

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